(b) whether it is also a fact that by lifting the ban, VSNL (Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd.) will be affected; and

(c) if so, what remedial measures Government propose to take to protect the interests of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) While at present, in accordance with the New Telecom Policy (NTP-99), Internet Telephony is not permitted, Government is also required under this policy to monitor technological innovations and their impact on national development and review this issue at an appropriate time. Accordingly, Government has constituted an Expert Group, which includes a representative of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited, to review the matter. The report of the Group is awaited.

WTO Report on Subsidy to Farmers

†*359. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report published by WTO in which it has been stated that developed countries are regularly giving subsidy to their farmers annually;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that this subsidy is 42 per cent in European Union countries, 69 per cent in Japan, 20 per cent in Canada and 16 per cent in America; and

(c) if not, the details in this regard and the percentage of subsidy of their total annual agricultural production which is being given to the farmers in India at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMARABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the notifications filed by European Union, Japan, Canada and United States of America with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the total domestic support provided by them to their agriculture sector as a percentage of their value of agricultural production and their export subsidies

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

as a percentage of their total agricultural exports, are as given below:-

Sl. No.	Country/ Group of countries	Marketing/ Fiscal Year	Domestic Support as a percentage of value of total agricultural production	Export subsidy as a percentage of total agricultural exports
1.	European Union	1997-98	48.03%	8.6%
2.	Japan	1998	39.15%	0
3.	Canada	1997	10.60%	0
4.	USA	1997	28.59%	0.179%

The provisional estimates for the year 1997-98 indicate that the total domestic support provided by India to the agriculture sector would turn out to be a negative figure if the negative figures of the product specific support are adjusted against the non product specific support and other exempted categories of support extended by India.

Growth in demand of petro goods

*360. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is emerging as a major centre for petroleum industry with a six to seven per cent growth in the demand of petro goods as compared to the two per cent growth rate world-wide; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) The consumption of petroleum products in the country during last three years has shown growth which is as below:-

Period	Consumption of Petroleum Products (MMT)	& Growth
1997-98	84.3	6.5
1998-99	90.6	7.4
1999-2000	97.1	7.2